

Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 837

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: VS, CA, MARR

SUBJECT: CANADIAN REACTION TO ICCS HELICOPTER LOSS.

PRIME MINISTER' S OFFICE HAS PROVIDED TRANSCRIPT OF PRIMIN
TRUDEAU' S REMARKS TO PRESS FOLLOWING DOWNING OF ICCS
HELICOPTER.

BEGIN QUOTE: (EMBASSY TRANSLATION FROM FRENCH)

" Q.: MR. TRUDEAU, DOES THIS RAISE THE QUESTION OF CANADA' S
PARTICIPATION IN THE ICCS AT THE END OF THE SECOND 60- DAY
PERIOD?

" A. : NO, I DON' T BELIEVE THE TWO SHOULD BE TIED. WE KNEW
WHEN WE WENT TO VIETNAM THAT THERE COULD BE INCIDENTS. WE
HOPED THERE WOULD NOT BE BUT SURELY WE KNEW THAT THERE WOULD
BE RISKS IN GOING THERE, AND SIMPLY BECAUSE THERE HAS BEEN
AN INCIDENT, WHOSE SERIOUSNESS WE DON' T KNOW, WE SHOULD NOT
PANIC AND LEAVE. OUR POLICY IS CLEAR. WE WENT TO TRY TO
ESTABLISH A LASTING PEACE IN VIETNAM AND AS LONG AS WE CAN
HELP TO THAT END WE WILL STAY.

" Q.: DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THESE INCIDENTS WILL SERIOUSLY
HINDER THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION?

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" A.: I REPEAT, WE KNEW THERE WOULD BE INCIDENTS, WE KNEW AT THE START THAT THE CONDITIONS OF PEACE WERE CHANCY AND WERE NOT SURE IT WOULD LAST SO I CAN' T SAY THAT THIS INCIDENT WILL BLOCK OUR EFFORTS. I CAN ONLY SAY THAT WE WILL WAIT UNTIL THE END OF MAY TO EVALUATE OUR EFFICIENCY THERE.

" Q.: (ENGLISH) MR. TRUDEAU, COULD WE ASK YOU WHETHER THIS LATEST INCIDENT IN VIETNAM WILL AFFECT OUR POLICY?

" A. NO, I DON' T THINK IT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS LINKED TO OUR POLICY. WE KNEW WHEN WE WERE GOING THERE THAT THERE WERE CERTAIN DANGERS, THAT CERTAIN INCIDENTS MIGHT HAPPEN. WE DON' T KNOW YET HOW SERIOUS THIS ONE WAS OR IS. WE KNOW THAT THREE CANADIANS AT LEAST ARE INVOLVED BUT WE DON' T HAVE DETAILS OF WHAT HAPPENED AND WE' RE NOT GOING TO CHANGE OUR POLICY OR START ACTING AS THOUGH THIS WAS IN UNPREDICTABLE EVENT. WE KNEW THAT THERE WERE SOME RISKS AND THE CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WE WENT THERE ARE STILL THE WAY WE DESCRIBED THEM THEN (SIC). IT' S AN UNCERTAIN MISSION BUT IS IS ONE WHICH WAS REQUESTED OF US BY MANY NATIONS AND PARTICULARLY BY THE FOUR COMBATANTS OVER THERE. I BELIEVE CANADIANS HAVE CRITICIZED THE VIETNAMESE WAR FOR LONG ENOUGH AND DEMANDED THAT THERE BE A SETTLED PEACE; NOW THAT PEACE OR A FORM OF PEACE HAS COME THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS, WE ARE NOT GOING TO GET DISCOURAGED JUST BECAUSE THERE IS ONE INCIDENT THAT HAPPENED.

" Q.: BUT IF THERE ARE MORE INCIDENTS LIKE THIS, WOULD IT ENCOURAGE THE CHANCES THAT CANADA WILL PULL OUT OF VIETNAM?

" A.: WELL, I REPEAT, I DON' T WANT TO LINK ONE OR OTHER INCIDENTS TO OUR DECISION. OUR DECISION WILL BE MADE IN VIEW OF THE OVERALL SITUATION, WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF FULFILLING A USEFUL ROLE THERE OR NOT. THAT WILL BE THE BASIS ON WHICH WE WILL DECIDE.

" Q.: DOES THE GOVERNMENT PLAN TO PROTEST TO THE PARTIES WHO MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE INCIDENT?

" A.: THIS IS HYPOTHETICAL. SINCE THERE IS NO PRECISE INFORMATION BUT THIS WOULD NOT BE THE FIRST PROTEST. WE HAVE UNCLASSIFIED

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PROTESTED ON MANY OCCASIONS THAT PEACE IS NOT BEING OBSERVED.

WE ARE THERE AS OBSERVERS AND IT HAS ALREADY BEEN SAID THAT
WE HAVE AN OPEN- MOUTH POLICY AND THAT ON OCCASION IT HAS
BEEN TOO OPEN."
SCDMIDT

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